



Labor Day, 1977 Denver, CO

QUACK has been a bit of an anomaly to me from the very beginning. The intention at first was to take the "funny animal" concepts we were all exposed to in our childhood and use them in entertaining and perhaps enlightening grown-up stories. This is an admirable goal and one to which I still aspire, but I've been less than pleased with the over-all progress in this direction.

A major part of the difficulty lies in my own near-nil background in this genre. Unlike our flagship STAR\*REACH title, which gained a clear editorial path fairly quickly (at least in my own head), I hadn't really any idea how to get from the starting point to where I wanted to go. So I have been unable, even till the present, to establish clear editorial guidelines to the contributors. Thus I've been accepting incredibly diverse approaches to stories in hopes that (much like STAR\* REACH) an identity would begin to establish itself on its own.

Only I don't think this identity has occurred. While every story printed here has had its strengths and uniqueness — and I don't regret publishing any of them — each succeeding book, taken as a whole, still has not seemed to hold together as a unit. As a reader, one tends to get pulled in too many directions to fully enjoy an issue as much as one could if there were more unity of purpose.

So why am I writing all this? First, to explain what's happening here and in our next issue coming up. And second, to ask for some advice.

To work backwards, what seems to be the best approach now is to cut back on the number of contributors and concentrate on the two or three that work together the most successfully. What I'd like to hear from you is if you think this is a good idea and if you do, which strips would you prefer to see more — and why.

As for what's happening here and in QUACK No. 6, in order to also help find out what you want, I'm giving you different cover features than one might first expect in hopes of getting a sales gauge on the popularity of a couple of so-called "back-up" strips. This issue, as you can already see, the spotlight is on "The Wraith" (in more ways than one). Creator Mike Gilbert has developed his story-telling ability tremendously from his early work in this magazine and although "unknown" beyond QUACK, I think what he does is solid enough to justify the cover exposure. Next issue, Ted Richards' "E. Z. Wolff" (or actually, a spin-off, using his mad scientist "Quack" character from issue No. 3) will be our lead feature. Ted is easily the most knowledgeable of all the QUACK contributors regarding funny-animals and he

is continuing to educate me a lot in this area. His "E. Z. Wolf" strip has appeared widely in the Rip-Off Press newspaper syndicate and its own comics (from both Rip-Off Press and Last Gasp). I'm hopeful he'll be as well-received here as he has been elsewhere.

Any distinct changes will be in issue number Seven. If you respond quickly to my request for your opinions, I'll be able to announce any changes next issue. Till then...

Mile. Fridail





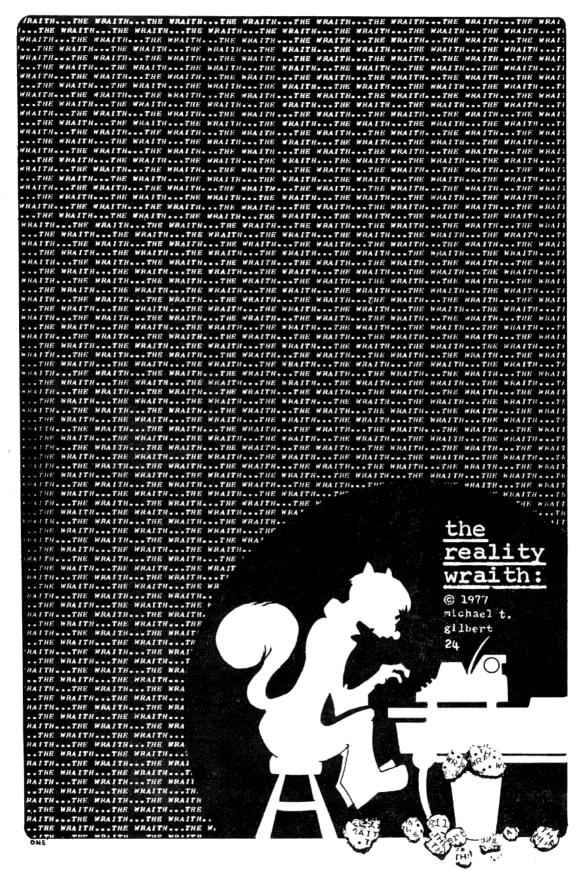
QUACK (No. 5) is published quarterly by Star\* Reach Productions, P.O. Box 385, Hayward, CA 94543; Mike Friedrich, editor and publisher. @1977 Star\* Reach Productions. World Rights Reserved. Front cover art and the story "The Wraith: The Reality Ray" @1977 Michael T. Gilbert. Back cover art and the story "Planet of the Ducks" @1977 Ken Macklin. "The Beavers" @1977 Dave Sim. "The Rabbit Wonder" @1977 Steve Leialoha. "A Bird In The Hand" @1977 Gene Day. "Oregon Bobcat" @1977 Dot Bucher. Address all inquiries c/o Star\*Reach Productions.

Contributions are not encouraged, though eventually read; warning: no return postage and it'll be trashed. FIRST PRINTING: September, 1977.

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RETAILERS: a list of wholesalers is available. WHOLESALERS: please inquire about our rates.

ANY SIMILARITY TO REAL PERSONS (or real animals), LIVING OR DEAD, EXCEPT FOR PURPOSES OF SATIRE, IS COINCIDENTAL.



MANY PEOPLE LIVE LIVES OF QUIET DESPERATION. THE WRITER IS ONE SUCH ANIMAL.



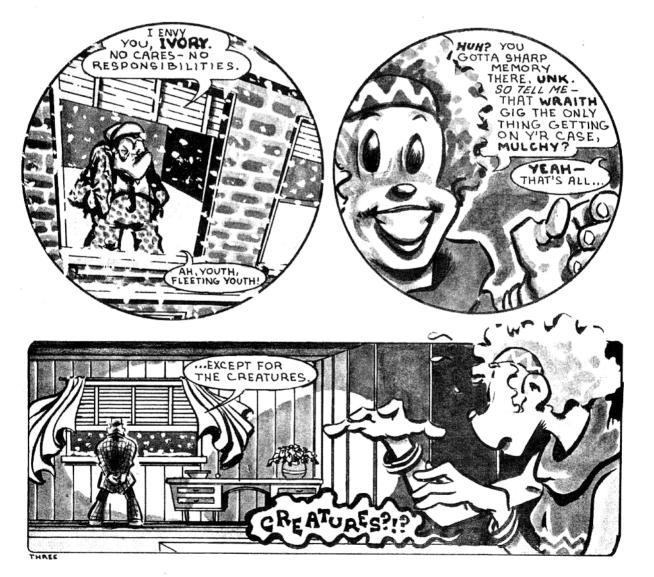
I...I'M SORRY
IVORY - DIDN'T
MEAN TO SNAP AT
YOU. BUT I'VE...
BEEN WORRIED
ABOUT THE WRAITH,
VERY WORRIED.





AL, UNK - YOU WORRY TOO MUCH! THE WRAITH'S TOUGH. HE CAN HACK THINGS O.K.





DON'T LOOK AT ME LIKE THAT . I'M NOT NOTS-BUT I WON'T VOUCH FOR THE REST OF TH' WORLD! BAH!



NO SOONER DO

"DUCK DEATH"

CASE OFF MY BACK, THAN I START GETTING

CRAZY REPORTS

GET THAT

CRAZY LOOKIN'
THINGS! NO TWO
ALIKE. EVERYBODY'S
SEEIN' 'EM. I'D
CHALK IT UP TO
CRACKPOTS - BUT
MAYOR CYANIDE
SAYS SHE'S SEEN 'EM
TOO. CAN'T SWEEP
THIS ONE UNDER THE
RUG. BAH! I THINK
SHE'S NUTS



ANYBODY HURT?

NAW. THEY'RE HARMLESS. BUT A LOTTA PEOPLE ARE GETTING SPOOKED. NOBODY KNOWS ANYTHING BOUT 'EM. SO NATURALLY IT GETS DUMPED ON MY LAP!

BUT THAT'S NO EXCUSE F'R ME YELLING AT YOU.FORGIVE ME, SWEETIE?

DON'T SWEAT IT,





I'M GONNA STOP BY AND SAY "HI" TO THE WRAITH. AIN'T SEEN HIM IN AGES ANY MESSAGES?



IN T'DAY.

ALWAYS USE WAS THE WRATH REY OF M. MOLOHBERRY POLICE VANIDE OLTH IS

PRECINCE IS

JUST GIVE 'IM

THIS LETTER. CAME



AND So...

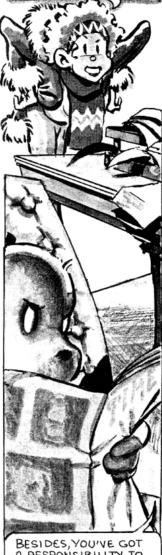








FUCK YOU! SINCE
NEVER, SMART-ASS!
AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED
THOSE CHEAP DETECTIVE
PULPS OF YOURS ARE
PRETTY ASININE. BUT
THEY DO PAY YOUR RENT.
NO BOOKS - NO BUCKS!
AND EVEN MANIC-DEPRESSIVE
DETECTIVE'S GOTTA EAT.



BESIDES, YOU'VE GOT A RESPONSIBILITY TO YOUR FANS. A LOT OF PEOPLE LIKE THAT GUNK YOU WRITE!



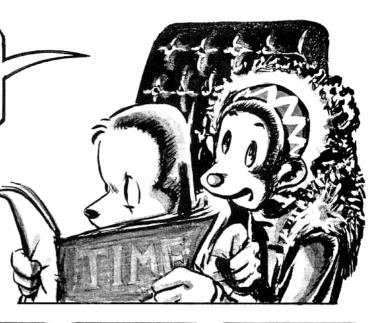
LOOK AT THIS! YOU
HAVEN'T EVEN CHECKED
OUT THE GALLEYPROOFS ON YOUR
GOTHIC ROMANCE BOOKS.
YOUR EDITOR MUST
BE HAVING A REAL
SHIT-FIT!



EVER HEAR OF ALCATRAZ JR. HIGH?
ALL TH' HARDASSES WENT TO OLD
ALCATRAZ - TH' ARMPIT OF TH'
EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM. TEACHERS
WERE ALWAYS GETTIN' SLICED
UP IN THAT PLACE. I STARTED
GOIN' THERE WHEN I WAS TEN —
SKIPPED A COUPLE OF GRAPES, YKNOW?

ME BEIN' YOUNGER THAN THE OTHER KIDS — THAT ADDED TO TH' FACT THAT I WAS JUST ABOUT TH' ONLY WHITE GIRL IN TH' PLACE — MADE MY SCHOOL LIFE PRETTY ROUGH. I WAS ALWAYS GETIN' HASSLED. FOUGHT MY WAY T'CLASS EVERY DAY.

I DIDN'T TAKE ANY CRAP,
THOUGH! — AND AFTER TRADING
A FEW BLOODY NOSES AN'
KNOCKING OUT A FEW TEETH. I
I MADE SOME FRIENDS, Y'KNOW?



MY HOMELIFE WAS SHITSVILLE TOO --BUT T WON'T GET INTO THAT NOW.



TH' WHOLE SCENE WAS TH' PITS - REAL BAD NEWS, Y'KNOW? NOTHIN' SEEMED TO MATTER MUCH. ME AND TH' GUYS'D GO TO TH' HILLS BEHIND TH' SCHOOL, MAKE OUT AND BLOW SOME WEED. SOON I WAS DOIN' LUDES, ACID, P.C.P. ANYTHING I COULD SNORT, STICK OR SWOLLOW.

IT WAS LIKE - REAL NEAT FOR A WHILE. TWO YEARS OF COMIN TO CLASS STONED ALL TH' TIME. BUT LIKE, I STARTED LOOKIN' AT TH'OTHER DUDES ONE DAY - AND, LIKE WOW! THEY WERE ALL IN JAIL OR O.D.ING OR LAYIN' IN TH' MORGUE, BLEW ME AWAY!!!



TH WHOLE SCENE WAS REAL-Y'KNOW-FUCKED UP. I MEAN, HERE I WAS-TWELVE YEARS OLD F'R CHRISSAKES -AN' ALREADY BURNT OUT. SURE I HAD THINGS TOUGH BUT JESUS! I LET THOSE THINGS BEAT ME DOWN. T'HELL WITH THAT! TOO MUCH T'DO AND SEE IN THIS WORLD TO GIVE UP WITHOUT A FIGHT. SO I WENT COLD TURKEY. IT WAS HELL CLEANIN' UP MY ACT- BUT I DID IT MAN-CUZ I HAD TO!

AND NOW YOU GET HIGH ON LIFE-PIGHT?

ALRIGHT - SO I'M
LECTURING SUE
ME'BUT LOOK, WARITHYOU ... DO SO MUCH
GOOD. A LOT OF
PEOPLE LOOK UP TO
YOU, MAN. THEY
NEED SOMEONE LIKE
YOU Y'CANT JUST
LET THEM DOWN,



YOU'RE A .... A
SYMBOL: SURE
IT'S EASY T'GIVE
UP. BUT I DIDN'T.
AND YOU'RE TOO
TOUGH TO...

YEAH!YEAH! YOU GOT A LETTER FOR ME?

AREN'T YOU LISTENING TO ANYTHING I ... YES I DO GODDAMMIT!

READER'S DIGESTYERS DU

IT'S PROBABLY NOT—

MEY! LISSEN TO

THIS! IT'S FROM

SOME PROFESSOR—

SAYS HE HAS INFO

ON THE CREATURES—

YOU KNOW— THE

ONES THAT'VE BEEN

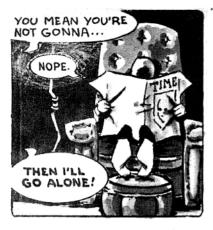
DRIVING MULCHY BATTY!

IT'S EVEN GOT HIS

ADDRESS. WOW!

WOTTA BREAK, HUH?



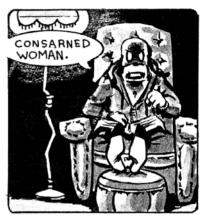


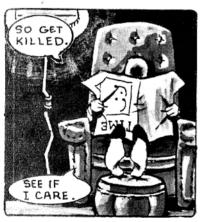


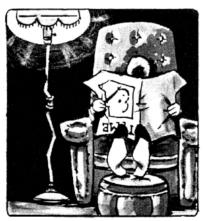




















EIGHT

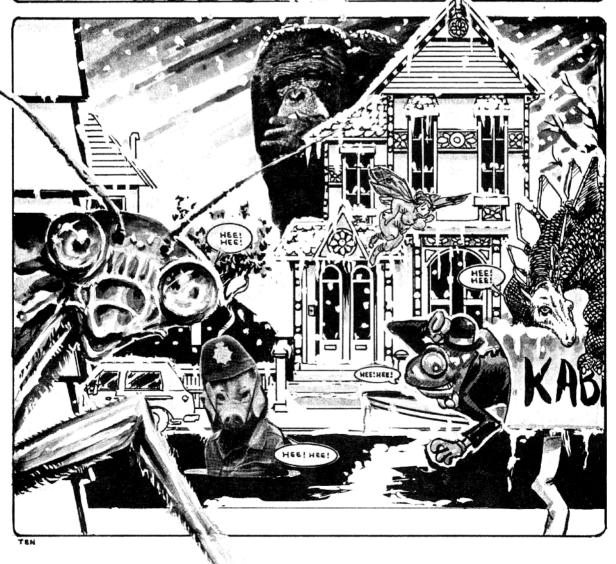


LOOK, MULCHBERRY - I'M GONNA SNEAK INSIDE AND SEARCH FOR IVORY. IF YOU DON'T HEAR FROM ME IN FIFTEEN MINUTES NOTIFY YOUR COP BUDDIES...







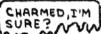












ON, MY. YOU MUST BE THE WRATH, DEAR FELLOW.

THE WRAITH, KABBIBLE WRAITH GOT IT?

ENOUGH WITH TH' CHIT-CHAT, DOC. PUT THAT FANCY FLASH-LIGHT DOWN AND COME UP WITH A FEW ANSWERS.

YOU SENT ME A LETTER —
SOMETHING ABOUT STRANGE
CREATURES. MY ASSOCIATE,

TVORY SNOW, CAME HERE TO INVESTIGATE.

THAT DEAR LITTLE DARK EYED GIRL?

YOU GOT IT, GRAMPS! NOW WHERE IS...

ELEVEN



















HAVE A DOSE OF WRAITH!



PERMIT ME TO EXPLAIN, SIR. YES, REALITY - AS WE KNOW /7 - IS AN ARTIFICIAL CONSTRUCT. SCIENTISTS AND PHILOSOPHERS HAVE FORMULATED CERTAIN LAWS THAT ATTEMPT TO DEFINE "REALITY".



ALL MISCONCEPTIONS, OF COURSE!

OF COURSE. AND I - I HAVE
INVESTED FIFTY YEARS OF
MY LIFE TO REALIGNING
THOSE MISCONCEPTIONS.

OH MY, YES! A MOST
FASCINATING PROBLEM!





SIZE, FHAPE TANGIBILITY - ALL-ALL
THOSE STRAIGHT-JACKETS OF
PERCEPTION - HAVE BEEN
RENDERED MEANINGLESS
BY MY REALITY RAY.
YOU DO UNDERSTAND
NOW - DON'T YOU,
WRATH? HMMM?







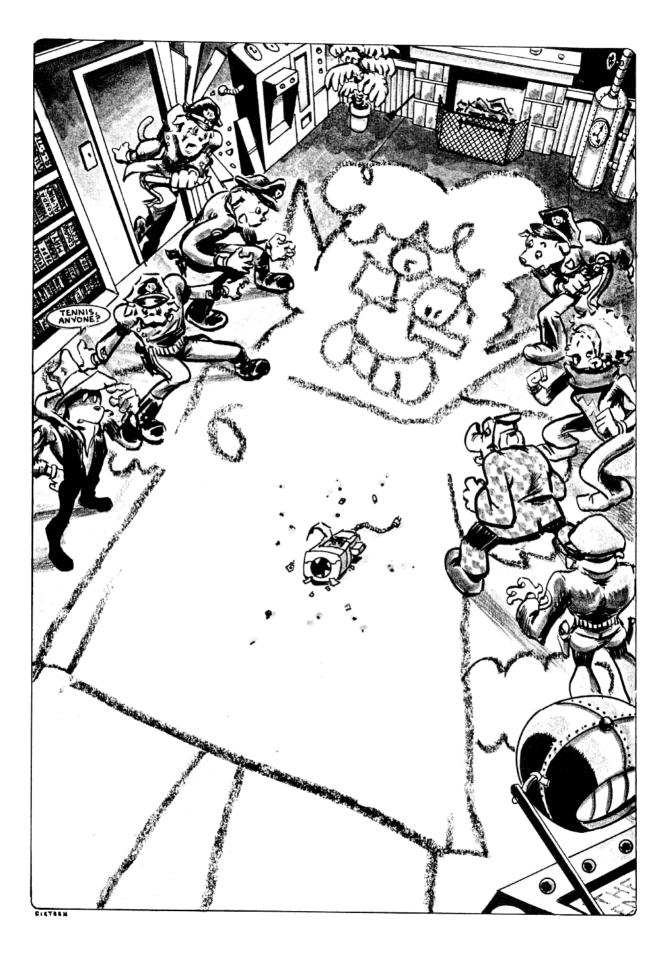








I'M OK. WRAITH - THE REVERSE RAYS CHANGED US ALL BACK TO THE WAY WE





M

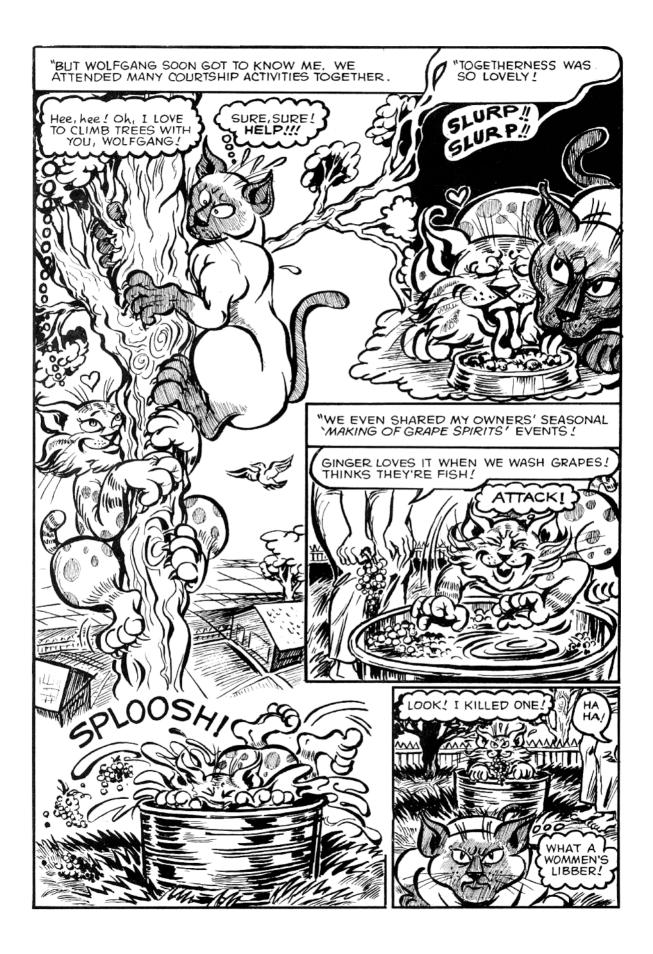
"AT LAST, LONG LOVE !"

"AHH, SPRING! THE SEASON OF REBIRTH! SYMBOLIC FREEDOM! WHEN YOUNG THINGS PUSH THROUGH THE EARTH TO GREET THE WARM SUNSHINE! Sigh!





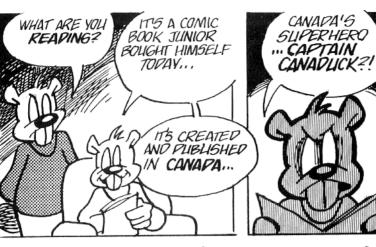










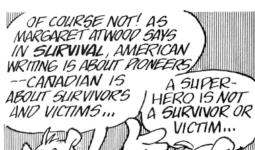










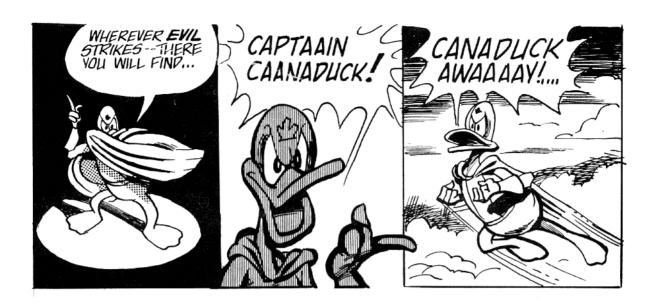




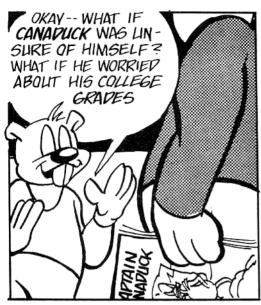


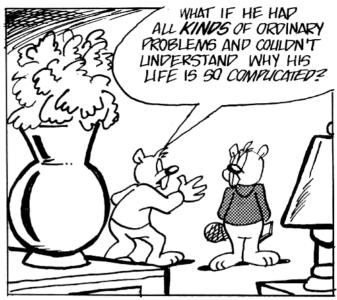


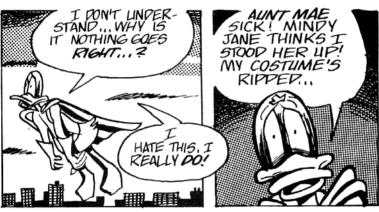
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A SURVIVOR
WHO CAN BEAT
THE CHICKEN SOUP
OUT OF A TANK IS
NOT A
SURVIVOR











WALKING DOWN TO WORK, HE'S HIT WITH COSMIC RAYS WHICH TURN HIM INTO ...



























**CANUCK COMICS GROUP**<sub>®</sub> THE VICTIM 71 FEB 02498 A HERO FOR OUR TIME! **30**¢ LEAVE ME ALONE ... ...PLEASE? SUPER-HERO? I'D HATE TO SEE A TRULY CANADIAN BARBARIAN! THAT ... THAT WOULD BE A TRULY CANADIAN SUPER-HERO!







FINALLY, TEN SHEETS OF CORRASABLE BOND AND MANY @!X&!+'S LATER...



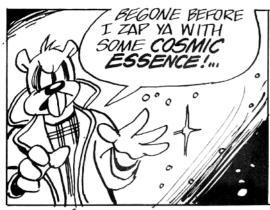






a, white Beaver







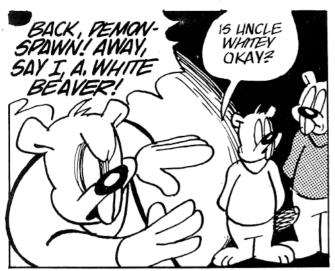


COSMIC ESSENCE? BUT THE DEMONS ARE SMALL-FRY--NOW I HAVE TO

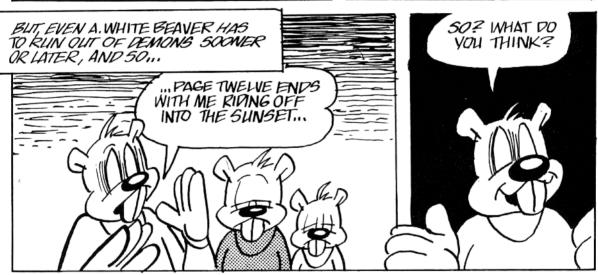
FACE THE HEAD HONCHO!!!

























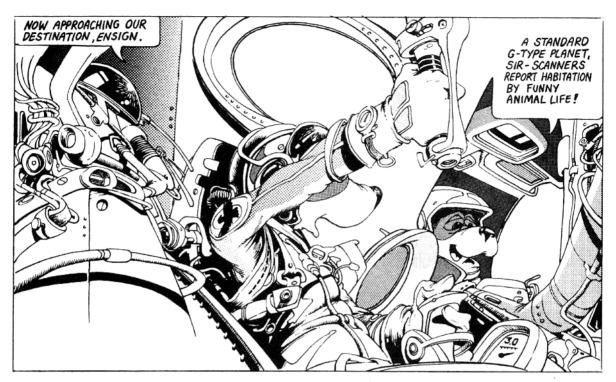




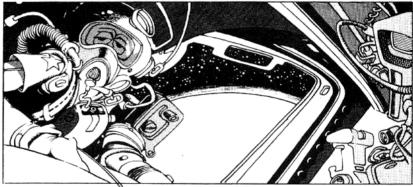








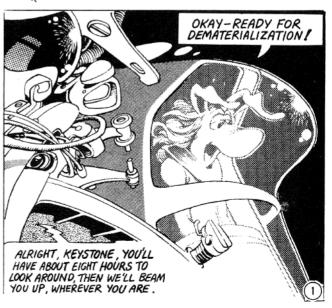
YES, A NORMAL WORLD TO OUTWARD APPEARANCES—YET COULD IT HOLD A CLUE TO THE SINISTER DEMISE OF HEALTHY CULTURES? WHAT WAS IT THAT STUNTED THE GROWTH OF INTELLIGENT CIVILIZATION ON DENEB AND VEGA 12? AND WHY WAS IT THAT NO STARFLEET INVESTIGATOR HAD RETURNED WITH AN INTELLIGENT ANSWER?



TO TACKLE THIS MYSTERY, STARFLEET REQUIRED THE TALENTS OF THE MOST CLEVER, COURAGEOUS CADET IN THE FLEET! UNFORTUNATELY, ALL THEY HAD WAS — KERWIN KEYSTONE OF EARTH! HALF AARDVARK, HALF PLATYPUS, WITH A KEEN MIND AND A LUST FOR ADVENTURE!



@ 1977 KEN MACKLIN







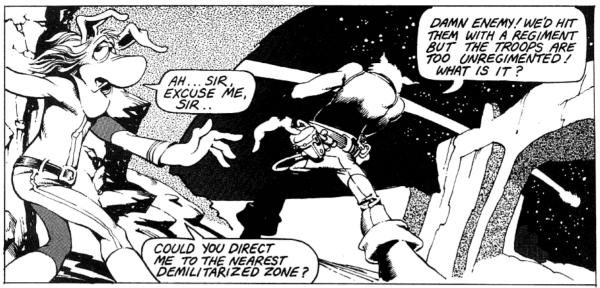


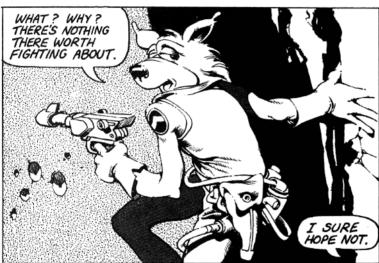


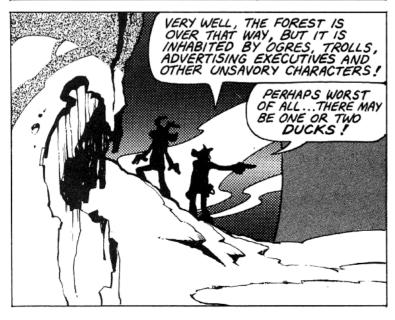








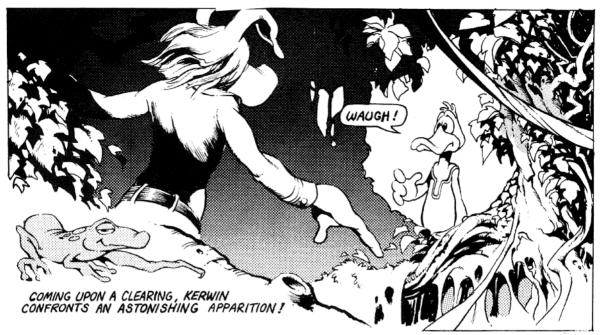


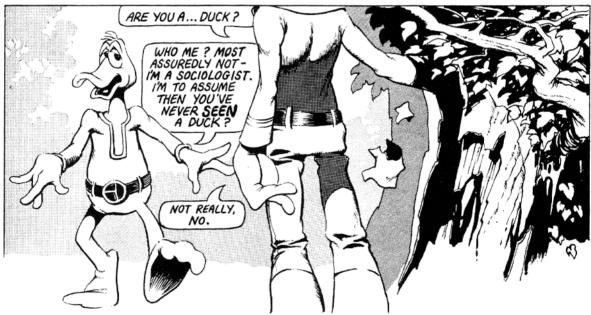


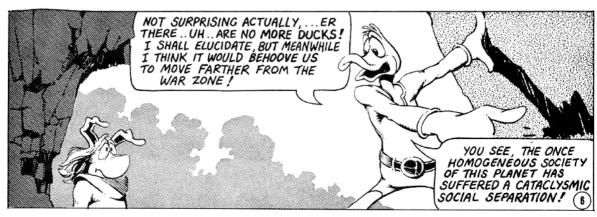


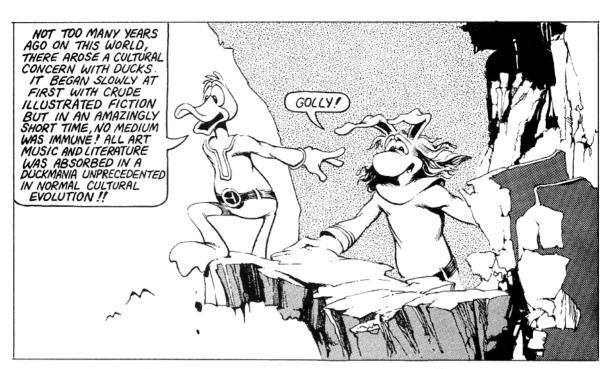














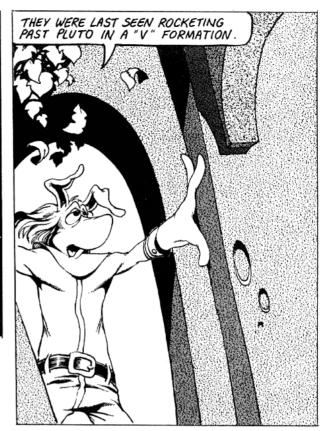






BACK IN THE 1990'S, ALL DUCKS THAT WERE LEFT ON EARTH WERE PUT ONTO ROCKET SHIPS AND SENT OUT INTO SPACE.

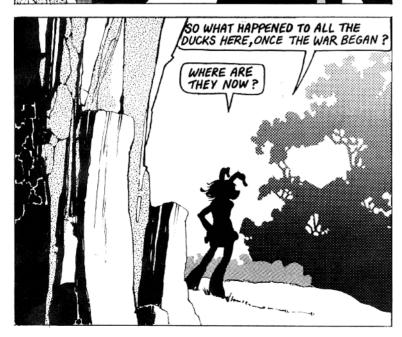


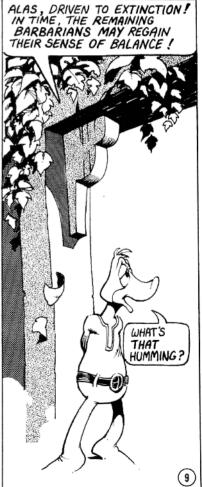


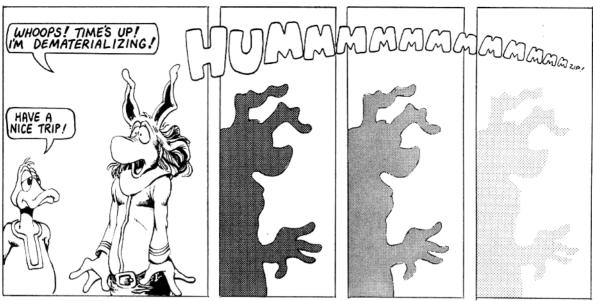


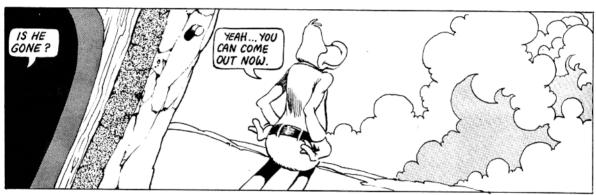
















YRIGHT © 1977 by GENE DAY WHO IS THIS PEATHERED FOWL IN FLIGHT? WHAT TERROR HAUNTS HIM?



WHY DOES HE RUN SCREAM-ING THROUGH DISMAL DARK ALLEYS?

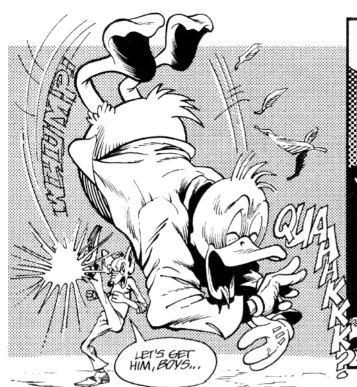


**WHAT DEMONS FOLLOW** FAST HIS **WEBBED** HEELS?























## IMAGINE IF YOU WERE GOING TO START A COMICS COMPANY FROM SCRATCH... WHAT WOULD YOU DO?



## Well, folks, STAR\*REACH IS DOING ALL THIS NOW!





